



MINUTES

OCONEE COUNTY COUNCIL

Regular Meeting

June 7, 2022

MEMBERS, OCONEE COUNTY COUNCIL

Mr. John Elliott, Chairman, District I
Mr. Paul Cain, Vice Chairman, District III
Mr. Julian Davis III, Chairman Pro Tem, District IV
Mr. Glenn Hart, District V
District II

Oconee County Council met at 6:00 PM in Council Chambers, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC with all Council Members [Mr. Hart via FaceTime], County Administrator Amanda F. Brock, County Attorney David Root, & Jennifer C. Adams, Clerk to Council present.

Press: Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, notice of the meeting, date, time, place of meeting and agenda were posted on the bulletin board at the County Administrative Offices, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC, and the County Council website [www.oconeesc.com/council]. In addition, it was made available [*upon request*] to the newspapers, radio stations, television stations and concerned citizens.

Members of the press present: Riley Morningstar / The Journal

Call to Order

Mr. Elliott called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Mr. Elliott opened the meeting reminding the public they have two opportunities to speak during Council meetings, which is during the public comment session and also during the public hearing session, if scheduled. Other than those two instances, the public should remain silent during the Council meeting. Anyone making a disturbance during the meeting will be asked to leave Council Chambers for the remainder of the meeting.

Moment of Silence

Mr. Elliott asked for a moment of silence prior to the Invocation by County Council Chaplain.

Invocation by County Council Chaplain

Mr. Root, County Council Chaplain, gave the invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Davis led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

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Brought to you by Your Oconee.**

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cain, approved 4 – 0, to approve the May 17, 2022 regular minutes as presented.

Attorney's Comments

Mr. Root offered an overview to Council and attending citizens of the County's rules related to Public Hearings.

Mr. Root requested a motion to remove **Resolution 2022-11** from the agenda due to pending documentation.

Mr. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Elliott, approved 4 – 0, to remove **Resolution 2022-11** from the agenda.

Mr. Root made note to Council regarding updates within **Ordinance 2022-01** related to the table on pages one and two and noted that the updates are in red.

County Administrator's Comments

Ms. Brock noted to Council and citizens that early voting is open at the Pine Street offices from 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Mr. Davis added that he had just spoke with Voter Registration and Elections before the meeting, and was informed that the last day to early vote would be Friday.

Proclamations

PROCLAMATION 2022-10 A PROCLAMATION HONORING MR. DANNY HARRIS, LEAD EQUIPMENT FOREMAN, UPON HIS RETIREMENT

Mr. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cain, approved 4 – 0, to approve **Proclamation 2022-10** on first and final reading.

PROCLAMATION 2022-11 A PROCLAMATION HONORING MS. STELLA ROBERTA WILLIAMS, OCONEE COUNTY SENIOR RECORDS SPECIALIST, UPON HER RETIREMENT

Mr. Cain made a motion, seconded by Mr. Davis, approved 4 – 0, to approve **Proclamation 2022-11** on first and final reading.

PROCLAMATION 2022-12 A PROCLAMATION HONORING MR. DANIEL POLK, OCONEE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY BRANCH MANAGER, UPON HIS RETIREMENT

Mr. Cain made a motion, seconded by Mr. Davis, approved 4 – 0, to approve **Proclamation 2022-12** on first and final reading.

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Public Comment Session

If you are not able to attend in person and you have a comment, you may submit it by contacting our Clerk to Council, Jennifer C. Adams at jennifercadams@oconeesc.com or 864-718-1023, so that she may receive your comment and read it into the record.

Pastor Carleatha Benson addressed Council with her concerns related to maintenance of County roads and culverts, affordable housing, and her opinion that a newsletter would be helpful in keeping citizens informed of happenings within the County, then closed with her thanks to Council for their service.

Ms. Monica White, member of the Oconee County Library Board of Directors, offered her appreciation to Mr. Daniel Polk for his 26 years of service as Head Librarian at the Salem Branch of the Oconee County Public Libraries.

Council Members Comments

Mr. Davis addressed Pastor Benson's concerns related to maintenance of County roads and culverts and affordable housing, then went on to state that communication is important for our citizens and referenced our YouTube channel, Your Oconee, where all meetings are live streamed and available for viewing afterwards as well.

Mr. Cain added that there is a competitive, low income housing project in the City of Seneca and in regards to her pipe pressure, he noted Oconee County government does not operate any utilities and suggested she contact her local utility provider.

Public Hearings for the Following Ordinances *If you would like to be heard during either of the public hearings, please contact Clerk to Council Jennifer C. Adams at jennifercadams@oconeesc.com or 864-718-1023 so that your participation by may be coordinated.*

ORDINANCE 2022-01 AN ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH THE BUDGET FOR OCONEE COUNTY AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE LEVY OF TAXES FOR ORDINARY COUNTY PURPOSES, FOR THE TRI-COUNTY TECHNICAL COLLEGE SPECIAL REVENUE FUND, FOR THE EMERGENCY SERVICES PROTECTION SPECIAL REVENUE FUND, FOR THE ROAD MAINTENANCE SPECIAL REVENUE FUND, FOR THE BRIDGE AND CULVERT CAPITAL PROJECT FUND, FOR THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CAPITAL PROJECT FUND, FOR THE PARKS, RECREATION, AND TOURISM CAPITAL PROJECTS FUND, FOR THE DEBT SERVICE FUND, FOR THE VICTIM SERVICES SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS, FOR THE CAPITAL VEHICLE / EQUIPMENT FUND, ALL IN OCONEE COUNTY FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2022 AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2023.

Mr. Elliott opened the floor for Public Comment.

Mr. Matthew Durham addressed Council in opposition to **Ordinance 2022-01**, stating, that in his opinion, the following items should be removed from the proposed budget:

1. Increased Recreational Funding
2. Increased funding for Oconee Support
3. New Code Enforcement Officer position
4. New PRT Administration position
5. New Park Ranger position

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Mr. Durham went on to state that he believes the new fuel contingency account is not properly funded and that in his opinion, this is not a budget, it's a spending plan.

Mr. Mickey Haney addressed Council in regards to **Ordinance 2022-01** and addressed the following subjects:

1. Affordable Housing
2. Fee Schedules
3. Budget Transparency
4. Airport Jet Fuel with a handout [copy filed in backup]

Ms. Brock assisted Mr. Haney with understanding the proposed budget in relation to airport jet fuel.

Mr. Haney ended by stating his opinion that the proposed FY2022-2023 budget is leaps and bounds better than past years.

Mr. Wayne Owens addressed Council in support of **Ordinance 2022-01** and offered his personal opinion that the increase in the budget is due to growth in the County.

Mr. Elliott closed the Public Hearing regarding **Ordinance 2022-01**.

ORDINANCE 2022-02 AN ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH THE BUDGET FOR THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF OCONEE COUNTY AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE LEVY OF TAXES FOR THE OPERATIONS OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF OCONEE COUNTY FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2022 AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2023.

Mr. Elliott opened the floor for Public Comment.

Noting that no citizens signed up to address Council; Mr. Elliott opened the floor for any citizen wishing to address Council regarding this ordinance. No citizen addressed Council and no citizen submitted or presented any written comments for the record.

Mr. Elliott closed the Public Hearing regarding **Ordinance 2022-02**.

ORDINANCE 2022-03 AN ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE FOR THE LEVY OF TAXES FOR THE KEOWEE FIRE SPECIAL TAX DISTRICT AND TO ESTABLISH THE BUDGET FOR THE KEOWEE FIRE SPECIAL TAX DISTRICT FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2022 AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2023.

Mr. Elliott opened the floor for Public Comment.

Noting that no citizens signed up to address Council; Mr. Elliott opened the floor for any citizen wishing to address Council regarding this ordinance. No citizen addressed Council and no citizen submitted or presented any written comments for the record.

Mr. Elliott closed the Public Hearing regarding **Ordinance 2022-03**.

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Third Reading of the Following Ordinances

ORDINANCE 2022-01 AN ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH THE BUDGET FOR OCONEE COUNTY AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE LEVY OF TAXES FOR ORDINARY COUNTY PURPOSES, FOR THE TRI-COUNTY TECHNICAL COLLEGE SPECIAL REVENUE FUND, FOR THE EMERGENCY SERVICES PROTECTION SPECIAL REVENUE FUND, FOR THE ROAD MAINTENANCE SPECIAL REVENUE FUND, FOR THE BRIDGE AND CULVERT CAPITAL PROJECT FUND, FOR THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CAPITAL PROJECT FUND, FOR THE PARKS, RECREATION, AND TOURISM CAPITAL PROJECTS FUND, FOR THE DEBT SERVICE FUND, FOR THE VICTIM SERVICES SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS, FOR THE CAPITAL VEHICLE / EQUIPMENT FUND, ALL IN OCONEE COUNTY FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2022 AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2023.

Mr. Cain made a motion, seconded by Mr. Davis, to approve **Ordinance 2022-01**.

Mr. Elliott stated our proposed budget increase reflects growth in our tax base before reassessment. We will decrease the millage to negate the increased revenue due to the reassessment. Public safety is nearly fifty percent of our budget. We are budgeting 13 new positions and 12 are public safety positions. We are increasing the Sheriff's and deputy's salaries, along with an increase in recreation funding.

Mr. Davis noted that Mr. Durham was not present on second reading of **Ordinance 2022-01** and went on to state that the amount of budget meetings this year was the most that he has ever attended in his time on Council.

Mr. Davis went on to defend proposed funding for the requested 13 new positions and the increase in funding for recreation and Oconee Support included in **Ordinance 2022-01**.

Mr. Cain spoke in support of the requested 13 new positions, with special focus on the additional Code Enforcement Officer that has been requested.

Ordinance 2022-01 approved 3 – 1 [Mr. Hart opposed], on third and final reading.

ORDINANCE 2022-02 AN ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH THE BUDGET FOR THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF OCONEE COUNTY AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE LEVY OF TAXES FOR THE OPERATIONS OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF OCONEE COUNTY FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2022 AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2023.

Mr. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cain, to approve **Ordinance 2022-02**.

Mr. Davis offered his appreciation to the Oconee County School District for staying within the millage rate that was set for them.

Ordinance 2022-02 approved 3 – 1 [Mr. Hart opposed], on third and final reading.

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ORDINANCE 2022-03 AN ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE FOR THE LEVY OF TAXES FOR THE KEOWEE FIRE SPECIAL TAX DISTRICT AND TO ESTABLISH THE BUDGET FOR THE KEOWEE FIRE SPECIAL TAX DISTRICT FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2022 AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2023.

Mr. Cain made a motion, seconded by Mr. Davis, approved 4 – 0, to approve **Ordinance 2022-03** on third and final reading.

Second Reading of the Following Ordinances

None scheduled for this reading.

First Reading of the Following Ordinances

ORDINANCE 2022-14 AN ORDINANCE GRANTING CERTAIN EASEMENT AND/OR ENCROACHMENT RIGHTS TO CORE SVA SENECA EDINBURG, LLC, OR ITS AFFILIATE, AT OR NEAR PROPERTY COMMONLY REFERRED TO AS THE PIER.

Mr. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cain, approved 4 – 0, to approved **Ordinance 2022-14** on first reading.

ORDINANCE 2022-15 AN ORDINANCE TO APPROPRIATE AND AUTHORIZE THE EXPENDITURE OF \$1,500,000 OF LOCAL CORONAVIRUS FISCAL RECOVERY FUNDING UNDER THE AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT OF 2021 (“ARPA”) FOR PURPOSES OF IMPROVEMENTS TO THE SENECA CREEK BOAT RAMP FACILITIES; AND OTHER MATTERS RELATED THERETO.

Mr. Davis made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cain, approved 4 – 0, to approve **Ordinance 2022-15** on first reading.

First & Final Reading for the Following Resolutions

RESOLUTION 2022-11 A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AND APPROVING THE ASSIGNMENT AND ASSUMPTION OF A FEE IN LIEU OF TAX AGREEMENT BY AND AMONG OCONEE COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA AND EPOCH CLEMSON, LLC.

Resolution 2022 – 11 was removed from the agenda, per County Attorney David Root’s request, pending completed documents on a motion made by Mr. Davis, seconded by Mr. Elliott, approved 4 – 0.

Council Committee Reports

None scheduled for this meeting.

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Council Committee Appointments

Real Estate, Facilities, and Land Management Chair Appointment / Member Appointment

Mr. Elliott made a nomination, approved 4 – 0, to appoint Mr. Davis as Chair and himself as new member to fill the vacant seat on the Real Estate, Facilities, and Land Management Committee.

Law Enforcement, Public Safety, Health and Welfare Member Appointment

Mr. Elliott made a nomination, approved 4 – 0, to appoint Mr. Cain to the Law Enforcement, Public Safety, Health and Welfare Committee vacant seat.

Board & Commission Appointments

Arts and Historical Commission

At-Large Seat: No questionnaire on file for this seat

Conservation Bank Board

1 At-Large Seat: No questionnaire on file for this seat

Parks, Recreation, and Tourism

1 At-Large Seat Representing the Lodging Industry: No questionnaire on file for this seat

Executive Session:

None scheduled for this meeting.

Adjourn:

Mr. Hart made a motion, approved unanimously, to adjourn at 7:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Jennifer C. Adams
Clerk to Council

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